

Name: _____ Date: _____

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

Primary Sources

- First hand evidence
- A record of the past made at the time of an event

Examples of Primary Sources

- Personal diaries
- Photographs
- Advertisements
- Maps from the time period
- Statistics
- Speeches given during the time period
- Letters written during the period

Secondary Sources

- Second-hand accounts
- An interpretation of the past based on primary and other secondary sources

Examples of Secondary Sources

- Your textbook
- Educational videos made since the event
- Books written by historians years after an historical event

Analyzing a Source

When analyzing a source, consider these questions:

1. What is the **nature** of the source?
 - What type of source is it (letter, diary, textbook)?
 - Was the author closely involved in the event? Is this important?
 - Was it written soon after the event or much later? Does this matter? Why?
2. What are the **contents** of the source?
 - What arguments and facts about the event are given?
 - What opinions, viewpoints, or attitudes about the event are given by the author?
3. How **reliable** is the source?
 - Why did the author write the document? How might this affect what is being said?
 - What was the author's role in this event? What effect might this have?
 - What is the author's frame of reference? What social class, nationality, occupation, ethnic or religious group did the author belong to?
 - What bias might this lead to?
4. How does this source **compare** with other sources on the topic?
 - Based on what you have read in this text and other sources, would you consider this description of the event accurate? Why?
 - Does this source give you any new information about the event?
 - What new conclusions about this event can you make based on this source?